

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MINUTES

The Human Rights Commission met on Tuesday, August 20, 2019 at 5:00 p.m. in the Multi-Purpose Room at the Kandiyohi County Historical Society.

Members present were: Shelly Huseby, Shawn Mueske, Vicki Davis, Barbara Little, Jill Benson, Marlin Breems, Richard Engan, John Salgado Maldonado, Nate Erickson and Lilbon Clark.

Item No. 1 Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Shelly Huseby at 5:00 p.m.

Item No. 2 Approve Minutes of Meeting

Chair Huseby presented the minutes of the April 16, 2019 meeting for discussion. Commission Member Benson moved to approve the Human Rights Commission minutes of April 16, 2019 and Commission Member Breems seconded the motion, which carried. Chair Huseby announced an ordinance was passed at an ELCA conference that the ELCA will be a sanctuary congregation. Also announced was a Lunch-n-Learn through the diplomats committee held by the Chamber of Commerce on September 19th from noon to 1:00 p.m. at Heritage Bank with five interfaith speakers.

Item No. 3 Public Comment

There were no members of the public in attendance who wished to comment.

Item No. 4 Willmar Interfaith Ministry:

Chair Huseby introduced Nadia Milani Fifita from the Willmar Interfaith Network who gave a brief history of the group and their motto of "Better Together." The group brings together representatives of multiple Christian denominations. She described several initiatives they have been sharing with the community and the gatherings with a very diverse group of people. She touched on recent discussion of when a speaker was brought to a local church to speak about the Trojan Horse of interfaith dialogue and a pastor attended to hear what the speaker was sharing. The Commission discussed the particular speaker and his anti-Islamic intentions. An event is being planned for September 10th at the City Auditorium hosted by THEE Book Club for Patriot's Day where this speaker, William Fedderer, will be talking. Mayor Calvin has been requested to give the opening welcome. The Commission discussed the fear that this event is being portrayed as patriotic and giving honor to firemen, police, boy scouts, etc. is going to turn into hate speech event. It was the consensus of the Commission to express their concern for this event to the Mayor.s

Item No. 5 GARE Update:

Chair Huseby updated the Commission on the GARE events that City and Commission members have participated in. The next meeting will be held on September 12th in Redwood Falls. On July 18th the League of Minnesota Cities sponsored an afternoon training which was an awareness education on racial issues was well received by City staff and elected officials.

Item No. 6 Other Business

Chair Huseby was approached by the Willmar Chamber of Commerce for the opportunity to sponsor a Diversity Award in Willmar starting in April 2020 which recognizes an outstanding business or business representative who demonstrates or fosters diversity in the workplace. The Commission discussed the award and expressed interest in formulating the nomination form. Chair Huseby will share an example nomination form used by St. Cloud for the Commission to review to craft the form for Willmar. The Commission will be able to choose the recipient of the award.

The next meeting date of the Commission will be Tuesday, September 17, 2019 at 5:00 p.m. A motion was made by Commissioner Benson, seconded by Commissioner Engan and passed to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 6:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Janell Sommers
Administrative Assistant